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Estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council

United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered an advance version of the report of the Secretary-General on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council that contains the proposed resource requirements for 2017 for the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) (A/71/365/Add.5). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 29 November 2016.

2. The main report of the Secretary-General (A/71/365) provides an overview of the proposed resource requirements for 2017 for 31 special political missions and related cross-cutting issues. Five addenda to the main report cover the specific requirements for thematic clusters I to III and the two largest missions, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and UNAMI (A/71/365/Add.1-5). The budget proposals of the Secretary-General for the Office of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Yemen and the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Conflict Prevention, including in Burundi (both under cluster I), and the proposed budget for the United Nations Mission in Colombia (cluster III) are presented under separate addenda. The Advisory Committee's comments and recommendations of a cross-cutting nature pertaining to all special political missions are contained in the main report of the

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Committee (A/71/595). This includes the Committee's comments on the Kuwait Joint Support Office for thematic cluster III missions, while the comments and recommendations of the Committee regarding the budget proposals for thematic clusters I to III, UNAMA and UNAMI are presented in its related reports (A/71/595/Add.1-5).

3. The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly approved a biennial provision of $1,124,400,000 net under section 3, Political affairs, of the programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017 for special political missions (see resolution 70/249 A). A summary of the provision for the biennium is provided in annex I to the main report of the Secretary-General.

II. Resource utilization in the biennium 2016-2017

4. Sections I and II of the report of the Secretary-General provide an overview of the resource requirements for UNAMI for 2017, including planning assumptions and priorities for 2017 and projected performance information for 2016 (see A/71/365/Add.5, paras. 1-62). Table 1 provides a breakdown of the estimated expenditure of the Mission for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016 and the projected requirements for 2017.

Table 1
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq: total resource requirements (net)
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	1 January-31 December 2016			*Requirements for 1 January-31 December 2017*				
Category	*Appropriation* (1)	*Estimated expenditure* (2)	*Variance* (3)=(1)-(2)	*Appropriation 2016* (4)=(1)	*Total requirements* (5)	*Non-recurrent requirements* (6)	*Variance (2017-2016)* (7)=(5)-(4)	*Net requirements for 2017*[a] (8)=(5)-(6)
Military and police personnel costs	8 581.4	7 988.2	593.2	8 581.4	8 287.0	–	(294.4)	7 693.8
Civilian personnel costs	79 740.9	80 982.7	(1 241.8)	79 740.9	80 976.7	–	1 235.8	82 218.5
Operational costs	31 221.5	29 452.0	1 769.5	31 221.5	28 168.3	–	(3 053.2)	26 398.8
Total	**119 543.8**	**118 422.9**	**1 120.9**	**119 543.8**	**117 432.0**	**–**	**(2 111.8)**	**116 311.1**

[a] Net requirements after taking into account the estimated underexpenditure or overexpenditure for 2016.

5. With respect to the results-based-budgeting frameworks, the Advisory Committee continues to note that a number of expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement for UNAMI lack clarity and accuracy regarding what could or should be achieved by the Mission in relation to the mandates and related activities, and that certain indicators of achievement or performance measures could be more precise. The Committee provides further comments and recommendations in this regard in its main report (A/71/595).

6. Explanations with respect to table 1 are contained in paragraphs 229 to 265 of the report of the Secretary-General. The projected net underexpenditure for 2016 of $1.12 million, or 1 per cent, comprises:

(a) Lower-than-budgeted requirements for military and police personnel ($593,200), attributable mainly to the lower contractual rates for rations arising from the award of a new contract and to the reduced requirement under freight and deployment of contingent-owned equipment;

(b) Higher-than-budgeted overall expenditure for civilian personnel ($1,241,800), attributable mainly to a lower vacancy rate than projected for National Professional Officers and Local level staff, as well as a higher dependency allowance, effective 1 January 2016;

(c) Lower-than-budgeted requirements under operational costs ($1,769,500), inter alia, in connection with lower expenditures under: (i) official travel ($260,600), attributable mainly to lower training-related travel requirements, with most training conducted within the Mission, offset in part by increased official travel necessitated by regional developments; (ii) facilities and infrastructure ($2,579,200), attributable mainly to lower maintenance costs and reduced contract prices, offset in part by increased costs for utility and waste disposal services; and (iii) communications ($14,500), attributable to lower requirements for public information services, offset by increased requirements for spare parts. The aforementioned lower requirements are offset by higher requirements under: (i) ground transportation ($81,300), mainly attributable to the replacement of armoured glass for UNAMI vehicles; and (ii) air transportation ($1,096,000), resulting from the addition of one rotary-wing aircraft held in standby for emergency evacuation of staff in case of the collapse of the Mosul Dam.

III. Mandate and resource requirements for 2017

A. Mandate and planning

7. The Mission's planning assumptions for 2017, as well as its strategies and plans, are set out in paragraphs 39 to 56 of the report of the Secretary-General. It is indicated, inter alia, that if the formation of a government able and willing to promote genuine and meaningful reforms, and also aimed at combating corruption, continues to be delayed, the resulting popular discontent and reduced public institutional delivery could affect the Mission's planning assumptions for 2017. The Secretary-General further states that it is assumed that the Mission's efforts will continue to be affected by an unpredictable security environment for the foreseeable future and that, over the past two years, the exposure of United Nations personnel in Iraq to identified threats has increased. The Secretary-General also indicates that the Mission will work with the United Nations country team, in particular with the United Nations Development Programme, with respect to electoral assistance, including for the Provincial Council elections in the first half of 2017; the Council of Representatives elections in the first half of 2018; the elections to the Kurdistan regional parliament by the second half of 2017; and the finalization of the selection process for a new Board of Commissioners of the Electoral Commission by 2017 by the Council of Representatives, in close consultation with UNAMI.

8. In addition, the Secretary-General indicates that UNAMI will continue its activities with respect to the promotion of peacebuilding and State-building and its high-level political engagement. As part of the Mission's efforts at broadening the national reconciliation discussion, the Secretary-General states that UNAMI intends to open an office in Najaf, comprising six staff (1 P-4, 3 National Professional Officers and 2 Local level). With respect to State-building, the Secretary-General indicates that UNAMI will continue to use its good offices to assist Iraqi stakeholders and will continue to facilitate relations between the federal Government and the Kurdistan regional government and encourage the parties to fulfil their oil and revenue-sharing agreement of 2014.

B. Resource requirements

9. As shown in table 1, the proposed resources in the amount of $117,432,000 for 2017 for UNAMI represent an overall decrease of $2,111,800, or 1.8 per cent, compared with the appropriation for 2016 and are attributable to decreased requirements of $294,400 under military and police personnel and $3,053,200 under operational costs, offset by higher requirements of $1,235,800 for civilian personnel. Details relating to the proposed resource requirements for 2017 are explained in paragraphs 229 to 265 of the report of the Secretary-General.

1. Military and police personnel

10. The estimated requirements for military and police personnel for 2017 amount to $8.28 million, reflecting a decrease of $294,400, or 3.49 per cent, compared with the approved resources for 2016. The proposed resources would provide for the deployment of 245 United Nations Guard Unit personnel, unchanged from the previous year. The Secretary-General indicates that the variance between the 2017 requirements and the 2016 approved budget is attributable to revised contract rates for rations, offset in part by the increased standard rate of reimbursement of military personnel, effective 1 July 2017.

2. Civilian personnel

11. The approved staffing requirements for 2016 and the proposals of the Secretary-General for 2017 are summarized in table 2.

Table 2
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq: staffing requirements

	Positions	*Level*
Approved positions for 2016	873	1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 6 D-1, 17 P-5, 57 P-4, 54 P-3, 8 P-2, 210 FS, 116 NPO, 401 LL
Proposed positions for 2017	858	1 USG, 2 ASG, 1 D-2, 6 D-1, 16 P-5, 57 P-4, 53 P-3, 8 P-2, 207 FS, 114 NPO, 393 LL
Proposed new positions	1	1 P-2
Proposed redeployments	17	2 P-5, 2 P-4, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 6 FS, 2 NPO, 3 LL

	Positions	*Level*
Proposed reclassifications	1	1 FS to LL
Proposed abolishments	16	1 P-5, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 2 FS, 2 NPO, 9 LL

Abbreviations: USG, Under-Secretary-General; ASG, Assistant Secretary-General; FS, Field Service; NPO, National Professional Officer; LL, Local level.

12. The proposed staffing requirements for 2017 consist of 858 positions, comprising 351 international staff (144 in the Professional and higher categories and 207 Field Service) and 507 national staff (114 National Professional Officer and 393 Local level). The staffing requirements for 2017 reflect a net decrease of 15 positions (representing the abolishment of 3 Professional, 2 Field Service, 2 National Professional Officer and 9 Local level positions and the establishment of 1 P-2 position) compared with the approved level of 873 positions for 2016. Detailed information on the staffing requirements are contained in tables 2 and 3 and paragraphs 63 to 228 of the report of the Secretary-General.

13. Tables 4 and 5 of the report of the Secretary-General provide information on the proposed establishment of 1 new position (1 P-2) and the abolishment of 16 positions (1 P-5, 1 P-3, 1 P-2, 2 Field Service, 2 National Professional Officer and 9 Local level).

14. The Secretary-General proposes to abolish one position of Associate Programme Management Officer (P-2) in the Programme and Planning Unit in the Office of the Chief of Staff in Baghdad and, in turn, establish one new position of Associate Conduct and Discipline Officer (P-2), also under that Office but located in Kuwait, to strengthen the capacity and improve the responsiveness on matters related to conduct and discipline for the Mission (see A/71/365/Add.5, paras. 81-83). Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the proposed new Associate Conduct and Discipline Officer would support the Chief, Integrated Conduct and Discipline Unit, with a strong emphasis on UNAMI-related matters, in ensuring that the new accountability framework on conduct and discipline is properly implemented and adequately supported.

15. The Secretary-General proposes the abolishment of two positions from the staffing complement of the Kuwait Joint Support Office, namely, one position of Human Resources Assistant (Field Service), as the functions related to the recruitment of national staff were transferred to the Mission, effective April 2016 (ibid., para. 224), and one position of Finance Assistant (Field Service) in support of efforts to achieve greater efficiency gains, with the aim of reducing the required resources but at the same time maintaining and/or increasing the productivity and efficiency of services provided to client missions (ibid., para. 228).

16. The Secretary-General also proposes the abolishment of 13 positions that have remained vacant for 18 months or more, as follows:

(a) Public Information Office: two positions of Public Information Officer (National Professional Officer) in Baghdad (ibid., para. 130);

(b) Security Section: one position of Security Assistant (Local level) in Baghdad, one position of Security Assistant (Local level) in Erbil, two positions of

Fire Security Assistant (Local level) in Basra and Kirkuk and one position of Security Coordination Officer (P-3) in Baghdad (ibid., para. 142);

(c) Office of the Chief of Mission Support: one position of Senior Project Officer (P-5) and one position of Administrative Assistant (Local level) (ibid., para. 152);

(d) Human Resources Section: one position of Human Resources Assistant (Local level) in Baghdad (ibid., para. 163);

(e) Procurement Section: one position of Procurement Assistant (Local level) (ibid., para. 175);

(f) Surface Transport Section: one position of Driver (Local level) in Erbil and one position of Vehicle Technician (Local level) in Baghdad (ibid., para. 203).

17. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the security situation in Iraq remains volatile and unpredictable. The Committee was also informed that, specifically with respect to security staffing, the reductions proposed for 2017 will have a negative impact in terms of the ability of UNAMI to conduct field assessments, advisories, coordination and operations support to the United Nations programmes and activities and that it may therefore be advisable to reinstate some security positions in the UNAMI budget. On the other hand, the Committee was also informed, upon further enquiry, that the vacancies of 18 months or more of the five above-mentioned security-related positions have not affected the work of maintaining the security of the Mission and its personnel in the current security situation. **The Advisory Committee trusts that this issue will be clarified further to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

18. With respect to the proposed abolishment of a total of 11 national positions (2 National Professional Officer and 9 Local level), the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that it was the policy of UNAMI to retain national staff and to only abolish positions whose functions are no longer required. **In this connection, the Advisory Committee reiterates its recommendation that the Secretary-General undertake efforts to strengthen the Mission's national staffing complement, whenever appropriate, by nationalizing positions, considering the availability of qualified individuals in the local labour market (see also A/70/7/Add.15, para. 19).**

19. As indicated in paragraph 8 above, the Secretary-General proposes to establish a new office in Najaf, comprising six staff (1 P-4, 3 National Professional Officer and 2 Local level) through the redeployment of:

(a) One position of Political Affairs Officer (P-4) from the Office of the Chief of Political Affairs in Baghdad, to serve as Head of Office, and one position of Language Assistant (Local level) from the Office of Political Affairs in Basra (see A/71/365/Add.5, paras. 93, 95, 102, 103 and 105);

(b) One position of Human Rights Officer (National Professional Officer), from the Human Rights Office in Baghdad, to facilitate civil society and government authorities in the south central governorates in the areas of human rights and the rule of law (ibid., paras. 120 and 122);

(c) One position of Security Assistant (Local level) from the Security Section in Baghdad to assist with security support and to liaise with local officials on staff safety and security matters (ibid., paras. 140 (d) and (e) (i) and 143).

The Advisory Committee notes that a further two positions, one of Humanitarian Affairs Officer (National Professional Officer) in the Office of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Development and Humanitarian Affairs and one of Governorate Liaison Officer (National Professional Officer) for Najaf have been included under the resource requirements for 2016 (see A/70/348/Add.5, paras. 50 and 97).

20. The Secretary-General indicates that the Office of Supply Chain Management and Service Delivery includes the Central Warehouse Section, following a merger with the Acquisition Management Section, which was aimed at consolidating the processes of planning, acquisition of life support and major supply items, warehousing and inventory, and asset management. The Secretary-General also indicates that information on efficiencies achieved and lessons learned as a result of the merger is under discussion in the Department of Field Support (see A/71/365/Add.5, annex I, and A/70/7/Add.15, paras. 20 and 21). **The Advisory Committee reiterates its request that information on the efficiencies achieved and lessons learned as a result of the aforementioned merger be included in the Secretary-General's next report on UNAMI (see A/70/7/Add.15, para. 21). The Committee requested, but did not receive, an organization chart of the Office of Supply Chain Management and Service Delivery showing staffing and related lines of responsibility vis-à-vis the various locations, and trusts that such information will be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of the present report.**

21. **Subject to its comments and recommendations in the paragraphs above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve the Secretary-General's staffing proposals for UNAMI.**

3. Operational costs

22. Paragraphs 238 to 265 of the report of the Secretary-General provide a summary of the estimates of operational costs by category of expenditure, including the appropriation and estimated expenditure for 2016 and the projected requirements for 2017 (see table 3).

Table 3
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq: operational costs
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	1 January to 31 December 2016				1 January to 31 December 2017			
	Appropriation	*Estimated expenditure*	*Variance*	*Appropriation*	*Total requirements*	*Non-recurrent requirements*	*Variance (2017-2016)*	*Net requirements for 2017*
Category of expenditure	*(1)*	*(2)*	*(3)=(1)-(2)*	*(4)=(1)*	*(5)*	*(6)*	*(7)=(5)-(4)*	*(8)=(5)-(6)*
Operational costs								
Consultants	227.6	243.7	(16.1)	227.6	230.3	–	2.7	246.4
Official travel	1 718.0	1 457.4	260.6	1 718.0	1 469.7	–	(248.3)	1 209.1
Facilities and infrastructure	10 288.3	7 709.1	2 579.2	10 288.3	8 963.4	–	(1 324.9)	6 384.2
Ground transportation	1 047.3	1 128.6	(81.3)	1 047.3	966.9	–	(80.4)	1 048.2
Air transportation	6 309.7	7 405.7	(1 096.0)	6 309.7	5 971.0	–	(338.7)	7 067.0
Communications	5 448.4	5 433.9	14.5	5 448.4	5 133.1	–	(315.3)	5 118.6
Information technology	1 977.5	1 908.0	69.5	1 977.5	1 920.5	–	(57.0)	1 851.0
Medical	502.2	384.0	118.2	502.2	508.8	–	6.6	390.6
Other supplies, services and equipment	3 702.5	3 781.6	(79.1)	3 702.5	3 004.6	–	(697.9)	3 083.7
Total	**31 221.5**	**29 452.0**	**1 769.5**	**31 221.5**	**28 168.3**	**–**	**(3 053.2)**	**26 398.8**

Facilities and infrastructure

23. The requirements under facilities and infrastructure for 2017, in the amount of $8.96 million, reflect a reduction of $1.32 million compared with the appropriation of $10.28 million for 2016. The estimated requirements for 2017 include an amount of $1.17 million for security services and personnel, for 22 guards for Kuwait and 16 guards for Erbil and for explosive-detection dogs at four locations. The Advisory Committee notes that the Mission's requirements for explosive-detection dogs have increased from approximately $480,000 in 2016 to $719,249 in 2017 and was informed, upon enquiry, that the costs for 2016 had been underestimated and that the estimated costs for 2017 were based on actual established contract costs.

Air transportation

24. The requirements under air transportation for 2017 amount to $5.97 million, representing a decrease of $338,700 from the appropriation of $6.3 million for 2016, owing mainly to a lower total of flight hours and lower rates for fuel, offset in part by higher guaranteed fleet costs and a higher average cost per flight hour. The Advisory Committee recalls its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to commission the Office of Internal Oversight Services to include an operational audit of UNAMI air operations in the course of its audit programme for 2016 (see A/70/7/Add.15, para. 23) and was informed, upon enquiry, that the audit would be scheduled to take place in November 2016.

25. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly approve the Secretary-General's proposals under operational costs for UNAMI.**

UNAMI Office in Kuwait and Kuwait Joint Support Office

26. Information on the cost-sharing arrangements and collaboration in support areas with respect to the Kuwait Joint Support Office financed under the budget for UNAMI is provided in paragraphs 23 to 25 and 223 to 228 of the report of the Secretary-General. The resource requirements for the component of the Kuwait Joint Support Office financed under the budget for UNAMA are contained in the budget estimates for that mission (see A/71/365/Add.4, paras. 160-171). The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that of the 72 positions proposed for 2017 located within the Kuwait Joint Support Office, 39 would be funded by UNAMA and 33 by UNAMI, with a total of 7 positions to be dedicated to payroll processing (see also A/71/365/Add.4, table 12). Upon request, the Committee was provided with a consolidated table showing, for UNAMI and UNAMA, the proposed staffing levels for the Kuwait Joint Support Office for 2017 and the approved staffing levels for 2016 (see A/71/595/Add.4, annex). With regard to the provision of transactional support in the area of finance, the Secretary-General indicates that the Department of Field Support, under an interim arrangement, is processing payroll from the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe, Uganda, and the Kuwait Joint Support Office in order to address the operational needs of the Umoja cluster V roll-out (see A/71/365, paras. 99-102). Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that there was therefore a requirement to increase the staffing in support of the payroll functions located at the Kuwait Joint Support Office to a total of 18 staff through the redeployment of positions from field missions.

27. **The Advisory Committee continues to note the lack of clarity with regard to the structures, functions and capacity of the UNAMI Office in Kuwait and the Kuwait Joint Support Office, and continues to question the ongoing validity of maintaining separate structures in Kuwait with distinct reporting lines and accountabilities to UNAMI (see also A/71/595/Add.4, paras. 20-26). The Advisory Committee provides comments and recommendations on the Kuwait Joint Support Office and other structures in its main report on the estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and/or the Security Council (A/71/595).**

IV. Recommendation

28. **Subject to its comments and recommendations above, as well as the comments and recommendations contained in its main report (A/71/595), the Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Secretary-General's proposal for the resource requirements for UNAMI for 2017.**